

Matthew 21:1-16

Surprise! (Part 1)

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-16

Memory Verse: Matthew 21:5 “...Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey...”

Lesson Focus: Jesus was someone that was full of surprises. Rarely was anyone able to predict or anticipate what Jesus was going to say or do as His whole life of ministry. This is going to be our theme the next two weeks as we look at the triumphal entry of Jesus today and we celebrate His resurrection next week on Easter Sunday.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Triumphal Entry for 1st & 2nd, Word Search of verse from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Cut your own Palm Branch

Starter Activity: Roll out the Red Carpet

To get our lesson started, have some discussion on what it means to “roll out the red carpet” for someone. Some sample Qs below:

Q: Who has the red carpet rolled out for them? A: Kings/Queens, rich people, stars, etc.
Q: What does the scene look like when that person is walking on the red carpet?
A: People taking pictures, cheering, excited to be near that famous person.

Teachers: Consider taking the roll of red runner cloth that we provided you and clear some space to “roll out the red carpet” in your teaching area. Then pick a few volunteers who want to have their “Red Carpet Moment”. Consider even having a few kids sit on each side of the red carpet to cheer them on as they walk through. Ham it up by introducing them to everybody, pretending to take pictures, and high-fiving them as they complete their strut across the red carpet. Make it fun!

Ask the kids that participated how it felt to have everyone’s attention. For that moment you were the “most important” person in the room!

Now transition into our lesson by letting the kids know that there is a similar “red carpet moment” in the Bible that we are going to read about today.

Q: Who do you think this biblical “red carpet” is for? A: Jesus!

He is the “most important” person in the whole world and we are going to see how His red carpet moment was one of many surprises that Jesus had in store for everybody.

Bible Study:

Q: What are we celebrating next week? A: Easter, right!

Q: Now does anyone know what we call the Sunday before Easter? Palm Sunday!

We are going to take a break from our study of Nehemiah and look at what happened on Palm Sunday.

Matthew 21:1: Jesus is entering Jerusalem with His disciples for the last time. Jesus has been with His disciples for about three years SURPRISING everyone with healing, miracles, forgiving people of their sins, and claiming things about Himself no one had ever dared claim (like that He was God)!

The disciples were expecting Jesus to be this earthly King who will reign and make them fat and happy, but read **Matthew 20:17-19** to see why they are going to Jerusalem.

SURPRISE! (**Teachers:** Consider making a big deal over each “surprise” sprinkled throughout the lesson). Jesus tells them that it is time for Him to die! This being the third time He has told them, they clearly did not understand what He meant.

Matthew 21:2-3: Jesus picks two disciples for this task. **SURPRISE!** I can imagine these two disciples blankly looking at each other thinking this is a little crazy.

Q: Why do you think Jesus often sends His disciples out in groups of two?

A: This is wise for us even today. It is always good to have a buddy when out and about!

In Mark’s gospel (**Mark 11:5-6**) it says that some people actually questioned these two disciples. But after they said Jesus needed it, they let them go. * Can you imagine if Jesus “needed” something of yours? Wouldn’t it be AWESOME to give it to Him?

Matthew 21:4: All of this was predicted and prophesied 450-500 years beforehand!

Whoa! I think we need to pause for a second to understand how amazing that is.

(**Teachers:** Consider picking a child in your class and have them come up next to you and ask them to tell you what color car they came in to church in today. Then imagine or pretend that 500 years ago, before there were smartphones, cars, or even America itself someone wrote in a book, “*Behold RMC, _____ is coming to you today in a _____ car*”.

And here you are!) There are many, many prophecies like this about Jesus that He actually fulfilled proving that He was the Son of God! *

Matthew 21:5: This prophecy comes from **Zechariah 9:9**.

There is something **SURPRISING** about this verse. It predicted that a King was coming.

Q: When you think of Kings, what comes to mind?

A: Power, majesty, and splendor!

Q: But how does it say this King is going to come? LOWLY? **SURPRISE!**

Indeed, Jesus came as the King to fulfill this prophecy, but as He told the disciples before, He came not as the earthly King they were expecting, but as a King who will die for the sins of the world.

Matthew 21:6-8: Jesus is now having His “red carpet moment”!

Q: Where do we find “great multitudes” of people now? A: Super Bowl, Disneyland, etc.

Just like at those places, there is excitement in the air! Back on Palm Sunday it is because Jesus was working miracles and ancient prophecies were being fulfilled, therefore the people were all gathered and excited! *

Matthew 21:9: After honoring Jesus by putting their palm branches and coats on the road, now they honor him with their words.

Q: How many of you have been to a pro sports game at a stadium? What happens when the home team comes out? The crowd CHANTS and celebrates the coming of their team.

Well, the Jewish people of Jesus day used this CHANT from the Psalms and by saying this they identified Jesus as the Messiah King! *Hosanna* means: save us now! (**Teachers:** Consider acting out this scene a little bit on the red carpet you may have used earlier. Pick a boy in the class to be Jesus and I would suggest you or another leader be the donkey. Use the palm branches we provided and grab a few of the kids’ coats or some fabric from the resource room. Then have a few kids be on each side of the carpet to lay palm branches and coats down. As “the donkey” walks out with “Jesus” on its back, have all of the kids chant, “*Hosanna in the highest!*”)

Matthew 21:10-11: This all created such a ruckus that the whole city took notice!

SURPRISE! Imagine getting out of bed one Sunday morning and as you mosey over to the breakfast table you hear all of this noise outside your house on your street. You look out the window and you see all of these strangers chanting and celebrating as this dude walks through the crowd on a donkey.

Q: Wouldn’t you also wonder and ask who this guy is? Maybe that is what it was like for some of these people.

Matthew 21:12-13: SURPRISE! I don’t think anyone was expecting Jesus to do this in the temple!

Matthew 21:14-16: Jesus was miraculously healing people. Instead of praising God for the good Jesus was doing, the religious leaders got REALLY jealous.

Q: Did you notice WHO was crying out to Jesus in the temple? Kids just like you!

Key Point: SURPRISE! Jesus loves it when kids cry out to Him! The bossy religious leaders wanted them hushed, but Jesus said such praise from kids is perfect!

Q: Who remembers what “*Hosanna*” means? A: Save us now.

This is what Jesus came to do, boys and girls. The **SURPRISE** that no one was expecting (even though He had told them many times) was that He had to die for us to be saved! The people did not understand this and many of the same people who shouted “Hosanna” would shout “Crucify Him” just a few days later!

The prophecy we read in v. 5 said that the King would come **LOWLY**. Another prophecy said that He would bear the sins of His people (**Isaiah 53:4-6**). That is exactly what He did just a few days after Palm Sunday on Good Friday.

Boys and Girls: Remember what it cost Jesus to save you from your sins. Just like the kids back then took time to spend with Jesus on Palm Sunday, take a day this week and turn off the screens and read the Bible with your grown-ups. Take the “Bring It Home” with you and tell them you’d like to talk about the lesson with them. Or consider inviting a friend to church next week for our Easter weekend celebration!

Bring It Home

Download at: <https://rmcalvary.org/volunteering/childrens-ministry/family-resources/>

Lesson Theme: “Surprise! (Part 1)”

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Memory Verse: Matthew 21:5 “...Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey...”

Teachers/Parents: Today we studied Matthew’s account of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. This is because it happened on the Sunday before He died and rose again and that is exactly where we are in our calendar this week! We got our lesson started by talking about “rolling out the red carpet”. Who are some people that you would “roll out the red carpet” for if they came to your home?

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **Matthew 20:17-19**, which sets the stage for the Triumphal Entry. During class we emphasized how during Jesus’s earthly ministry He often *surprised* people with what He said or did. Why do you think what Jesus said here was *surprising* to the disciples?
- 2) Read **Matthew 20:27-28**. What is *surprising* about what Jesus says here?
- 3) In **Matthew 21:1-2**, we see Jesus sending out two disciples together. This is a common pattern of Jesus (see **Luke 10:1**). Why do you think Jesus often sent them out like this?
- 4) In **Matthew 21:4-5**, we see Jesus fulfilling a prophecy written 450-500 years before that day. What are some things that *surprise* you about this prophecy or its fulfillment?
- 5) In **Matthew 21:9**, the people are chanting some words from **Psalms 118:26** that were reserved for the promised King and Messiah. Ask your kids if they remember what “*Hosanna*” means. Why would the people chant this? Why might we chant this?
- 6) Read **Matthew 21:12-13**. Do you think the people in the temple were *surprised* by this? Why?
- 7) Read **Matthew 21:14-16**. Who does it say was also chanting “*Hosanna*”? Consider singing a worship song you all like together.